

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:
modulating the transparency of an image of an object as a function of an angle of incidence of a vector normal to a viewing surface at the surface of the object.

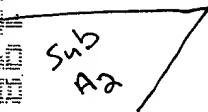


The method of claim 1, wherein the function comprises a cosine function.

The method of claim 1, wherein the function comprises a linear function.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the function comprises a non-linear function.

5. A system comprising:
a display; and
an image of an object projected on the display, where the transparency of the image is modulated as a function of an angle of incidence of a vector, normal to a viewing surface, with the surface of the object.



6. The system of claim 5, wherein the modulating function comprises a cosine function.

15 7. The system of claim 5, wherein the modulating function comprises a linear function.

8. The system of claim 5, wherein the modulating function comprises a non-linear function.

9. A system for controlling the transparency of an image of an object, the system comprising:

a display;

a processor capable of driving the display with an image; and

5 a graphics engine capable of running on the processor, generating the image, and modulating the transparency of the image as a cosine function of an angle of incidence of a vector normal to a viewing surface at the surface of the object.

10. A computer comprising:

a processor;

10 a computer-readable medium; and

a computer program capable of being executed from the computer-readable medium by the processor and modulating the transparency of an image as a function of an angle of incidence of a vector normal to a viewing surface at a surface of an object.

11. The computer of claim 10, wherein the computer-readable medium comprises a memory.

12. The computer of claim 10, wherein the modulating function comprises a cosine function.

13. The computer of claim 10, wherein the modulating function comprises a linear function.

20 14. The computer of claim 10, wherein the modulating function comprises a non-linear function.

15. The computer of claim 10, wherein the computer-readable medium comprises a storage device.

SuS
AH

16. A method for generating a transparency factor for an image of an object, the method comprising:

- selecting a viewing surface;
- determining an angle of incidence created by a vector normal to the viewing surface and the object surface; and
- calculating the transparency factor from the angle of incidence.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein calculating the transparency factor from the angle of incidence comprises the step of:

- calculating a cosine of the angle of incidence.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein calculating the transparency factor from the angle of incidence comprises the step of:

- calculating a linear function of the angle of incidence.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein calculating the transparency factor from the angle of incidence comprises the step of:

- calculating a non-linear function of the angle of incidence.

20. A method comprising:

- selecting a mode, the mode is FRONT_ONLY, BOTH_SIDES, or BACK_ONLY;
- determining a viewing angle;
- determining an object angle;
- calculating a theta, theta equals the viewing angle minus the object angle plus pi;
- assigning a function of theta to alpha, if the mode is FRONT_ONLY or BOTH_SIDES;
- assigning a function of theta minus pi to alpha, if the mode is BACK_ONLY;
- comparing alpha to zero;

assigning zero to alpha, if the mode is FRONT_ONLY and alpha is less than zero;
assigning zero to alpha, if the mode is BACK_ONLY, and alpha less than zero;
assigning minus alpha to alpha, if the mode is BOTH_SIDES, and alpha is less
than zero; and

5 assigning a transparency factor to alpha.

ADD
B1